



Training

## 5 Tips to Keep Your Lockout Tagout Refresher Training Fresh

Gillian Scott | Apr 18, 2019

### What You Need to Know

OSHA requires workers to be retrained in lockout/tagout procedures when their knowledge is shown to be lack or when job duties or equipment change.

Hands-on and task-specific training helps keep workers engaged, making training relevant to their everyday work.

Using real-life examples can remind workers of the importance of following safety procedures.

Using new technology to integrate video into training and to make training available via mobile devices can create a more immersive experience.

Offering shorter training sessions, or even offering microlearning, can help workers retain the knowledge presented.

Gamifying training can add opportunities for achievement and competition to otherwise routine sessions.

Lockout/tagout refresher training is vital to keeping employees safe in manufacturing facilities. Refresher training reminds workers of all the ways uncontrolled hazardous energy or moving machine parts can injure, maim or kill, and the methods that need to be used to prevent accidents. But if your training repeats the same information in the same way over and over again, employees may start tuning out.

“By its very nature as repeated material, refresher training can be an activity that workers feel is unnecessary,” says *Chris Kilbourne* at EHS Daily Advisor. “If workers feel they don’t need this training again, they may engage in presenteeism (i.e., being present at training sessions but not paying attention).”

The lockout/tagout (LOTO) standard from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (**29 CFR 1910.147, *The control of hazardous energy***) does not require any specific frequency for lockout/tagout refresher training, says Heather Hunt at *L&D Daily Advisor*.

However, it does require retraining if a periodic inspection shows workers don’t understand or are not correctly following energy control procedures. Employees must also be retrained if job assignments,

procedures, machinery or equipment change.

Even if lockout/tagout refresher training isn't required, it doesn't mean periodically retraining all affected employees in LOTO procedures isn't a good idea. Here are five ways to keep your lockout/tagout refresher training fresh—and keep employees tuning in instead of tuning out.

## 1. Make Your Lockout/Tagout Training Task-Oriented

As with most subjects, it's better to teach through doing rather than through only showing.

"Lecturing proves to be much less effective than hands-on training and demonstration," says **Julia Copeland**, CEO at Arbill, a safety equipment and training supplier. "Safety training requires 'doing' to really have an impact. Lecturing is passive and, well ... boring. You want to have your workers fully engaged in safety training."

In addition to hands-on tasks, training that focuses on specific tasks is more engaging for adult learners, says Jeff Dalto, an instructional designer and trainer at Convergence Training, in an **OH&S article**.

"Adult learners want their training to be relevant to their daily lives and to be focused on completing specific tasks," Dalto says. "Tailor safety training so it's relevant and clearly related to job tasks the employee performs. Avoid training that is too general, comprehensive or theoretical."

## 2. Use Examples of Real-Life Lockout/Tagout Incidents

Relating specific times and places where failure to apply lockout/tagout procedures endangered or injured workers can help make the importance of refresher training more concrete.

"These real-life stories happen every day," Copeland says. "Upon hearing them, it's hard to ignore how important it is to apply what they've learned in safety training."

Jill Potts, a technical service specialist in training and education with the 3M Personal Safety Division, writing for **OH&S**, agrees.

"The audience must understand how the training directly relates to their daily personal lives," says Potts. "An effective trainer presents how particular health and safety programs or topics impact workers."



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## 3. Use New Training Technology

Advances in technology mean the training itself can be more dynamic, and it can be accessed in new ways. In an **article in EHS Today**, Steve Zuckerman, global eLearning manager with DuPont Sustainable Solutions, suggests companies integrate e-learning methods into refresher training, including using video and mobile devices.

"The ease with which engaging, high-quality video can be created and streamed enables it to be seamlessly integrated within a classroom-based training session or made available on mobile devices for training on demand," he says. "The result is a more immersive training experience for employees."

## 4. Leverage Microtraining for “Bite-Sized” Lockout/Tagout Refresher Training

The human mind tends to wander—and it needs time to absorb new ideas. Potts notes that the average person will retain only 20 minutes of a 90-minute lecture.

“For dense, longer presentations, it is recommended that a training lecture last 50 minutes followed by a 10-minute break,” says Potts. “Focusing on key messages and themes and including frequent breaks may improve workers’ engagement and retention of the most critical details.”

Another option is to break topics down even further, into learning sessions of 5-10 minutes, sometimes referred to as *microlearning*.

“Microlearning promotes awareness-level learning, enhancing comprehension of specialized, individual tasks,” says Zuckerman. “It assists with sustainment of learning by making an abstract point concrete for learners and demonstrating how a procedure that is taught applies to a worker’s daily job.”

*Learn all about the devices that can help prevent hazardous stored energy accidents in your facility. Read “What Are the Best Lockout/Tagout Devices for Safety?”*

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Chris Kilbourne  
EHS Daily Advisor

## 5. Use Gamification in Your Refresher Training

Play is good for the brain. Refresher training is serious business, but adding games or quizzes can help make it more interesting.

“Gamification is emerging as a way to interest and incentivize workers during compliance training by injecting an element of competition and achievement to the exercise,” Zuckerman writes. “Typically, safety and compliance learning is reinforced through the use of post-training quizzes intended to recap key points to be retained by workers.”

Other methods include allowing employees to earn badges or points for completing training sessions. Kilbourne suggests sending trainees on a workplace scavenger hunt “to look for and record as many hazards as they can find.”

*How do you keep your safety and lockout/tagout refresher training fresh?*